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CH/AF/Bue \$ 77-037

APPROVED FOR RELEASE DATE: OCT 2001

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EAST ASIA BRIEF AP 77-037.Y

L. //VIETNAM.Y

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CONF:

AN OBSERVER WITH A SOUND KNOWLEDGE OF VIETNAMESE

POLITICS HAS PROVIDED AN INTERESTING ASSESSMENT OF VIETNAMESE

NAMES FOREIGN POLICY AND POSSIBLE TACTICS IN NEGOTIATIONS

WITH THE US.//Y

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//THE OBSERVER NOTES THAT VIETNAMESE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OVER THE PAST SIX
MONTHS AND THE GENERALLY LOW PROFILE THEY HAVE MAINTAINED
ARE DESIGNED, IN PART, TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION WITHIN
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY BEFORE THEY BEGIN SERIOUS
NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US. HE FEELS, HOWEVER, THAT THE
VIETNAMESE OVERESTIMATE THE LEVERAGE THESE TIES WILL
HAVE WITH THE US.//Y

//HE BELIEVES THAT, LARGELY BECAUSE OF POOR BUREAUCRATIC COMMUNICATIONS, THE VIETNAMESE HAVE LITTLE INFORMATION ON MIAS. IN HIS VIEW, THE RECENT RELEASE OF

12 NAMES WAS THE RESULT OF CONSIDERABLE EFFORT AND WAS

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NOT MERELY THE CYNICAL DISCLOSURE OF A FEW NAMES FROM IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT US PER-A MUCH LARGER LIST. SONNEL WOULD EVER BE ALLOWED TO CARRY OUT SEARCHES FOR MIAS OR KIAS WITHIN VIETNAM.//Y

//ALTHOUGH HANOI MAY INITIALLY APPEAR DURING NEGOTI-ATIONS TO BREAK THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE MIA AND WAR REPARATIONS ISSUES, HE BELIEVES AN ULTIMATE CONNECTION IS INEVITABLE UNLESS THE VIETNAMESE CAN OBTAIN WHAT THEY WANT FROM THE US. HE ALSO SUGGESTS THAT THE VIETNAMESE MAY NOW BELIEVE THEY HAVE OVERPLAYED THEIR HAND ON THE MIA ISSUE AND WORRY THAT DOMESTIC PRESSURE ON THE CAR-TER ADMINISTRATION TO OBTAIN A FULL ACCOUNTING FROM HANOI IS SLACKENING-//Y

//IN THIS REGARD. THE PRIMARY INTEREST OF THE VIET-NAMESE IS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE -- INCLUDING AID FROM THE IN THE OBSERVER'S VIEW, IT SHOULD BE RELATIVELY UN-**UZ**• IMPORTANT TO THE VIETNAMESE WHETHER US AID IS CONSIDERED "WAR REPARATIONS" OR "HUMANITARIAN AID." HE SUGGESTS

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MAKE SUPSEQUENT	' INSTALLMENTS CONTINGE	NT UPON A PROP	ER	
VIETNAMESE ATTI	TUDE IN APPLYING AND EX	XPLAINING THE	AID.	
HE ALSO SPECULA	TES THAT THE THIEU REGI	ME'S FROZEN A	27322	
IN THE US MAY B	E A MORE IMPORTANT NEGO	TIATING CARD	THAN	
IS GENERALLY RE				
//AS SUGGE	STED BY VIETNAMESE SENS	SITIVITY TO THE	E CRIT-	
ICISM OF US ANT	I-WAR ACTIVISTS, THE HU	MAN RIGHTS ISS	SUE	
MIGHT WORK TO THE	HE ADVANTAGE OF THE US	IN THE NEGOTIA	ZNOIT	
THE VIETNAMESE	ARE BECOMING AWARE THAT	INTERNATIONAL	•	
OPINION APPLIES	TO THEM AS WELL AS TO	OTHER COUNTRIE	. Z	
AND THAT IT MIGH	IT DELAY OR HINDER THE	ATTAINMENT OF	THEIR	
OBJECTIVEZ.//Y				•
//IN ADDITI	ON THE OBSERVER NOTES	THAT THE VIET	NAMESE	

APPEAR TO BE TRYING TO HOLD THE SOVIETS AT ARM'S LENGTH

POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY AND TO DISTANCE THEMSELVES

AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM SINO-SOVIET COMPETITION.

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